

Amendments of the Specification:

Please replace paragraph [0001] with the following amended paragraph:

[0001] This application is a continuation of copending U.S. Patent Application No. 09/858,457, filed May 16, 2001, which is a non-provisional application that ~~This application claims priority from U.S. Provisional Applications Nos. 60/279,906 to provisional application serial number (Attorney Docket No. PP/2613-36, filed March 29, 2001, entitled "CASE WITH INTERNAL LOCK", Inventor: Michael Lax); and provisional application serial number 60/221,953, filed on July 31, 2000,~~ all of which are the entirety of these applications are hereby incorporated by reference herein in their entireties.

Please replace paragraph [0081] with the following amended paragraph:

[0081] Bottom lock portion 172 also includes lock receiving members in the form of a first loop 716, a second loop 718, a third loop 720 and a fourth loop 722. Each loop is substantially rectangular in cross-section and defines a parallelepiped shaped void therein. Loops 716, 718, 720 and 722 are substantially collinear and define a lock insertion path or channel 188 on bottom cover 154. Second loop 718 includes a hook edge 724 which receives a latch discussed below. Lock insertion path 188 begins with an open portion 188a at the bottom of bottom cover 154 and terminates with a wall portion 188b at the top of bottom cover 154. Bottom cover 154 further includes a shelf 618 which terminates in an arcuate side guard that protects a recorded medium 70 disposed on shelf 618. When storage medium 70 is disposed on hub 702, storage medium 70 is supported by feet

64 ~~614~~ and shelf 618. As shown in the figures, shelf 618 juts out into lock insertion path 188.

Please replace paragraph [0086] with the following amended paragraph:

[0086] Referring to Figs. 12-15, there is shown a lock 400 in accordance with certain aspects of the invention. Lock 400 can be inserted into combined lock insertion path 212 to lock system 700 in a closed position, much like the way a deadbolt functions to lock a door in the closed position. Lock 400 may be made of any of the known materials, or by any of the known methods. Preferably, lock 400 is made of an acetyl homopolymer such as DUPONT DELTIN 500T and includes an extended rib portion 402 terminating in a wall 404. Lock 400 also includes a first catch mechanism 406 and a second catch mechanism 408. A catch mechanism may be moved to a position outside the periphery of base 426. This position may be referred to as a "third position." First catch mechanism 406 and second catch mechanism 408 include a first and second pin holding portion 410, 412 respectively. As shown most clearly in Fig. 15, each pin holding portion receives a pin 250, 252 so that a longitudinal axis of the pin is perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of lock 400. A notch portion 414, 416 is disposed in each pin holding portion 410, 412 facing wall 404. Each pin holding portion 410, 412 includes a curved front portion 411, 413 that facilitates insertion of lock 400 into a system of the invention. Pin holding portions 410, 412 further include latches or straight portions 407, 409 which engage hook edges 734, 724 of top lock portion 192 and bottom lock portion 172 respectively. In one embodiment, the walls which form notch 414, 416 form an angle which is

approximately 35°. The benefits of notches 414, 416 will be explained below.

Please replace paragraph [0087] with the following amended paragraph:

[0087] Each pin holding portion 410, 412 further includes a hook 418, 420 which is effective to mate with a corresponding hook 422, 424 of [a] base 426 of lock 400. Each pin holding portion 410, 412 is connected to base 426 through respective spring arms 428, 430. As can be discerned from FIG. 11, spring arms 428, 430 are not as tall as the rest of base 426 nor as tall as the spring arms shown in some of the previous embodiments. These thinner spring arms are relatively easier to move and rotate when assembling lock 400. Referring also to Figs. 16a, 16b, 16c and 16d ~~14a, 14b, 14c and 14d~~, there is shown a more detailed view of spring arm 428. It should be understood that the structure of spring arms 428 and 430 is virtually identical and so a discussion of only spring arm 428 is presented for the sake of brevity.

Please replace paragraph [0088] with the following amended paragraph:

[0088] Spring arm 428 is connected to base 426 through a spring arm notch 432. Notch 432 serves as a hinge about which pin holding portion 410 can be rotated. Spring arm 428 includes ~~an arcuate~~ a stem portion 434, which in some embodiments (not shown) may be arcuate, and a recessed portion 436. ~~Arcuate~~ Stem portion 434, recessed portion 436, and spring arm notch 432 serve to bias spring arm 428 outwardly away from base 426. Focusing also on Figs. 14 and

15, when lock 400 is manufactured, first and second catch mechanisms 406, 408 are bent outwardly away from base 426 due to the biasing produced by spring arm notch 432, recessed portion 436 and arcuate portion 434. A manufacturer then simply inserts pins 250, 252 into pin holding portions 406, 408 and then moves pin holding portions 406, 408 against this biasing force toward base 426 and mates hooks 418, 420 with hooks 422, 424.

Please replace paragraph [0089] with the following amended paragraph:

[0089] Referring again to FIG. 12, lock 400 further includes a security tag recess 748 which may optionally receive and retain a security tag (not shown). A disc and shelf receiving recess 750, which may be referred to as a "groove," defined by walls 752 and 754 extends from a portion of lock 400 proximate to second catch mechanism 408 to an end of lock 400 distal from wall 404. Also distal from wall 404 is a sharpened edge 756 which could be used to pierce ~~piece~~ a shrink wrap disposed around system 700.

Please replace paragraph [0097] with the following amended paragraph:

[0097] Other options for removing lock 400 from system 700 include using a combination of magnets 262 and 264 or magnets 258 and 260. Upon application of the magnets, lock 400 is now free to be extricated from system 700 and system 700 can thereafter be opened. Pins 250, 252 thus provide a mass available to be acted upon by the magnetic field generated by magnets 258-264 thereby facilitating removal of lock 400 ~~220~~ through the movement of pin holding portions 410, 412 ~~234,~~

236 holding pins 250 and 252. Pins 250, 252 should be sized to provide this additional mass.

Please replace paragraph [0098] with the following amended paragraph:

[0098] Referring now to FIGS. 2 and ~~an~~ 3, hub 702 is centered on bottom cover 154 both horizontally and vertically to assist in manufacturing using existing automated equipment. Hub 702 includes an outer ring 704 and an inner ring 706. Disposed proximate to and radially about inner ring 706, are a plurality of tabs 708. Six tabs 708 are shown but clearly any number could be used. Each tab 708 includes a base portion 710 and a head portion 712. Head portion 712 extends radially outward from base portion 710 so that the circumference of a circle drawn around head portions 712 is larger than a circumference of opening 72 of recording medium 70 (FIG. 1). The positioning of tabs 708 with respect to inner ring 706 defines a void 714 therebetween. Bases 710 of tabs 708 are pliant so that tabs 708 can be moved into void 714 upon the application of sufficient force. Bases 710 are also resilient in that they will return to a generally upright position (i.e. substantially perpendicular to a plane defined by bottom cover 154) when such a force is removed.

Please replace paragraph [0099] with the following amended paragraph:

[0099] In use, when recording medium 70 is to placed upon hub 702, opening 72 is placed around heads 712. A downward force is applied upon recording medium 70 and causes heads 712 to bend inwardly into void 714 due to the engagement of unused portion 74 with protrusion ~~pretrusions~~

heads 712. Upon the application of sufficient downward force upon recording medium 70, tabs 708 will bend inwardly far enough so that the circumference around heads 712 will be less than the circumference of opening 72 thereby allowing recording medium 70 to be placed upon outer ring 704 with opening 72 being coextensive with inner ring 706. At this point, unused portion 74 no longer applies a force upon heads 712 and tabs 708 resume their original position due to their natural resiliency. Heads 712 now retain recording medium 70 on outer ring 704 and feet 64 with minimal stress on medium 70. In order to remove recording medium 70, a user will place his fingers in finger access holes or recesses 66, and lift off recording medium 70 therefrom with minimal effort. In this way, recording medium 70 can be safely placed upon and removed from hub 702 without being damaged.

Please replace paragraph [0102] with the following amended paragraph:

[0102] Feet 64 are arranged on bottom cover 154 to follow the general contour of recording medium 70. In this way, the outer edges of recording medium 70 are caused to rest on feet 64. In FIG. 4, for example, feet 64 are arranged to follow the circular contour of a round recording medium such as a DVD. A first circle having a first diameter can be formed by connecting the tops of first protrusions 64a and a second circle having a second diameter larger than the first diameter can be formed by connecting the tops of second protrusions 64b. The diameter of the first circle (with first protrusions 64a) is further smaller than the diameter of recording medium 70. In contrast, the diameter of the second circle (with second protrusions 64b) is larger than

the diameter of recording medium 70. In this way, outer edges of recording medium 70 can be placed on protrusions 64a (and hub 156) and kept in place by protrusions 64b. Clearly, feet 64 do not have to be arcuate in shape. They can, for example, extend in a straight line as long as the distance between second protrusions 64b disposed on opposite sides of hub 702 62 is greater than the diameter of recording medium 70; and the distance between first projections 64a disposed on opposite sides of hub 702 62 is less than the diameter of recording medium 70.

Please replace paragraph [0103] with the following amended paragraph:

[0103] Feet 64 are spaced and arranged so that a user wishing to store or remove recording medium 70 from system 700 50 can grasp the circumferential edge of recording medium 70 using a plurality of his or her fingers without interference from feet 64. Recesses 66 are provided in between feet 64 to provide space for the user's fingers so that a user's fingers can engage the circumferential edge of recording medium 70 throughout the placement and removal of recording medium 70 from system 700 50.

Please replace paragraph [0108] with the following amended paragraph:

[0108] For additional security, top cover 152 further includes top side walls 89a disposed on either ends of top cover 152. Bottom cover 154 includes bottom side walls 89b disposed on either ends of bottom cover 154. All of top and bottom side walls 89a, 89b, extend substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis L of spine 56. Top

side walls 89a are disposed closer to the center of top cover 152 when compared to the distance between bottom side walls 89b and the center of bottom cover 154. In this way, when top cover 152 is closed upon bottom cover 154, top side walls 89a sit behind bottom side walls 89b. This yields a double wall between the exterior of system 150 and a recording medium disposed on hub 156. Bottom side walls 89b may include a recess 136. Similarly, top side walls 89a may include a protrusion 138. In this way, when top cover 152 is closed upon bottom cover 154, protrusions 138, mate with recesses 136 to help maintain system 150 in a closed position. System 700 can include further security features like those described in ~~co-pending application serial number 09/696,614~~ entitled ~~"CASE AND LOCK WITH IMPROVED DISC PROTECTION"~~ filed on October 25, 2000 U.S. Patent No. 6,561,347, the entire disclosure of which is incorporated by reference herein.

Please replace paragraph [0122] with the following amended paragraph:

[0122] Referring now to FIG. 35 15, when lock 220 is manufactured, a first door 254 is pivotably coupled to lock 220 opposite first catch mechanism 226 and a second door 256 is placed pivotably coupled to lock 220 opposite second catch mechanism 228. After pins 250, 252 are placed within pin holding portions 234 and 236 respectively, first door 254 and second door 256 are pivoted about pivot points 257 and 259 respectively and closed upon first catch mechanism 226 and second catch mechanism 228 respectively as is shown in FIG. 36 by any known method. In this way, first and second doors 254, 256 improve the aesthetic appearance of lock 220



and mask the position of pins 250 and 252 within pin holding portions 234 and 236. This masking makes it more difficult for a thief to ascertain the positions of pins 250, 252 and disengage lock 220 from system 150.

Please replace paragraph [0123] with the following amended paragraph:

[0123] An alternative lock 270 is shown in FIGS. 37-39. Lock 270 includes many of the same elements as lock 220 and, therefore, a description of these elements is omitted for the sake of brevity. At one end, lock 270 includes an extended rib 274 supporting a wall 272. A comparison of FIG. 38 ~~18~~ with FIG. 35 ~~15~~ reveals that wall 272 extends upwardly significantly farther than wall 222. This extra extension of wall 272 allows a user to more easily grasp and remove lock 270 from system 220. At another end, lock 270 terminates in a springed hook portion 276. Springed hook portion 276 facilitates removal of lock 270 by providing a spring force on lock 270 in an outward direction when pin holding portions 226, 228 are disengaged from hooks 190, 210. Springed hook portion 276 is thus effective to auto-eject lock 270 from case 150.

Please replace paragraph [0128] with the following amended paragraph:

[0128] Referring to FIG. 43, as with previously described embodiments, to remove lock 220, a magnet 258 is placed near pin 252 and emits a magnetic field which attracts pin 252 against the biasing force of leaf spring 232 thereby causing latch 248 to recede from hook 190. At the same time, a magnet 262 is placed near pin 250 and emits a magnetic field

which attracts pin 250 against the biasing force of leaf spring 230 thereby causing latch 242 to recede from hook 210. Once magnets 258, 262 ~~260~~ are so oriented, lock 220 is safely removed from combined lock insertion path 212 by safely sliding lock 220 out of combined lock insertion path 212.

Please replace paragraph [0133] with the following amended paragraph:

[0133] First and second pin holding portions 294, 296 further include flanges 300, 302 extending therefrom. Referring now also to FIG. 47, after pins (described above) are inserted into chambers 304, 306, first and second holding portions 294, 296 are pivoted through arms 312, 314 and inserted into base 298 of lock 280 so that flanges 300, 302 sit behind corresponding flanges 308, 310 in base 280. In this position, pin holding portions 294, 296 and base 298 define voids 316, 318 which can receive first and second pin holding portions 294, 296 ~~304, 306~~ if a force is applied to pin holding portions 294, 296 ~~304, 306~~ against the biasing force of leaf springs 312, 314. Additionally, the bias produced by leaf spring portions 312, 314 causes first and second pin holding portions 294, 296 to extend beyond a periphery 317 of base 298. Lock 280 is inserted and removed from case 150 in a similar way as lock 220.

Please replace paragraph [0136] with the following amended paragraph:

[0136] When lock 340 is inserted into case 150, the walls of bottom cover 154 and top cover 152 and the walls of lower lock receiving member 182 and lower lock receiving member 202 engage first and second locking members 346, 348. These

locking members 346, 348 are bent inwardly into voids 350, ~~352 348~~ to allow lock 340 to be fully inserted into lock insertion path 212. When lock 340 is inserted far enough into combined lock insertion path 212, the resiliency of locking members 346, 348 causes these members to unbend and mate with hooks 190, 210. However, to remove lock 340, a user would have to grasp wall 344 and pull lock 340 against the force produced by the resiliency of locking members 346, ~~348 352~~ within hooks 190, 210. This is a difficult task as wall 344 will generally be flush against system 150 thereby inhibiting a user from grasping wall 344. Moreover, as there are no pins disposed within locking members 346, 348, a user cannot apply magnets to cause removal of locking members 346, 348 from hooks 190, 210.

Please replace paragraph [0138] with the following amended paragraph:

[0138] When lock 354 is inserted into case 150, the walls of bottom cover 154 and top cover 152 and the walls of lower lock receiving member 182 and lower lock receiving member 202 engage forward inclined portions 364, 370 of first and second locking members 360, 362. These locking members 360, 362 are bent inwardly into voids 376, 378 to allow lock 354 to be fully inserted into lock insertion path 212. When lock 354 is inserted far enough into combined lock insertion path 212, the resiliency of locking members 360, 362 causes these members to unbend and mate with hooks 190, 210. However, to remove lock ~~354 340~~, a user would have to grasp wall ~~358 344~~ and pull lock ~~354 340~~ against the force produced by rearward inclined portions 368, 374, abutting against hooks 190, 210. As stated above, the slope of rearward inclined

portions 368, 374 is greater than the slope of forward inclined portion 364, 370. It is therefore, much easier for a user to insert lock 354 into case 150 than remove lock 354 from case 150. Further, wall 358 ~~344~~ will generally be flush against system 150 thereby inhibiting a user from grasping wall 358 ~~344~~. Finally, as there are no pins disposed within locking members 360, 362 ~~346, 348~~, a user cannot apply magnets to cause removal of locking members 360, 362 ~~346, 348~~ from hooks 190, 210.

Please replace paragraph [0140] with the following amended paragraph:

[0140] Referring again to FIG. 24, bottom cover 154 of case 150 includes a hub 156 fixedly mounted thereon and which receives and retains storage~~150~~ medium 70 thereon. Bottom cover 154 further may optionally include a memory recess 158 which can be used to store a memory card or similarly sized device (not shown) related to storage medium 70. Top cover 152 includes two resilient tabs 160 which can be used to retain documents related to storage medium 70.

Please replace paragraph [0146] with the following amended paragraph:

[0146] Referring to Fig. 53, there is shown another embodiment of lock 400, referred to herein as lock 1400, which can be used with system 600 or any of the other storage cases disclosed herein. As shown in the figure, lock 1400 may optionally include a security tag receiving portion 460. Security tag receiving portion 460 is defined by walls 462, 464 having key portions 466 (only the key portion for wall 462 is shown in the figure) extending inwardly. Posts 468,

470 are disposed at distal ends of security tag receiving portion 460 and are effective to receive and maintain openings 476, 478 of a bobbin 472. Bobbin 472 further includes keyholes 480, 482 (only one is shown in the figure) disposed on distal ends of bobbin 472 which mate with key portions 467, 466 respectively. Bobbin 472 may be used to hold a coil 474 which actuates an alarm if lock 1400 is moved beyond the security check point (not shown). Lock 1400 may also include a cut-away portion 461 disposed on one side of lock 1400 between first and second catch mechanisms 406, 408 (see FIGS. 12 and 13) and a hook portion 458. Cut-away portion 461 permits lock 1400 to be used with system embodiments which employ the feature of shelf 618.

Please replace paragraph [0148] with the following amended paragraph:

[0148] Referring to FIG. 56, there is shown yet another embodiment of a lock in accordance with certain aspects of the invention. Lock 3400 can be used with system 600 or any of the other storage cases disclosed herein. Lock 3400 includes spring hook portion 564. Unlike locks 1400 and 2400, lock 3400 does not include a security tag receiving portion but merely a structural support portion 566 that does not include a bobbin or coil. Structural support portion 566 includes three voids 5661, 5662, 5663. These three voids may be combined to form a single large void which can then be used to receive and retain a bobbin and coil as with the previous embodiments. Lock 3400 also includes a cut-away portion 461 ~~568~~ disposed on one side of lock 3400 between first and second catch mechanisms 406, 408 and hook portion

564. Cut-away portion 461 permits lock 3400 to be used with case utilizing shelf 618.

Please replace paragraph [0149] with the following amended paragraph:

[0149] Alternatively, referring to FIG. 57, there is shown another lock which could be used with system 600, or with any of the other storage cases disclosed herein. Lock 4400 ~~440~~ includes many of the features of the previous locks and a detailed description of these features is omitted for the sake of brevity. In fact, lock 4400 is virtually identical to lock 400 except the lock 4400 includes springed hook portion 626 at a distal end thereof. A security tag recess 628 is disposed between second catch mechanism 408 and springed hook portion 626. Security tag recess 628 may optionally receive and retain a security tag (not shown). A disc and shelf receiving recess 630, defined by walls 632, 634 extends from a portion of lock 4400 proximate to springed hook portion 626 to a position proximate to second catch mechanism 408. Disc and shelf receiving recess 630 is used to receive and retain storage medium 70 in combination with shelf 618. In use, when lock 4400 is inserted into system 600, walls 632, 634 slide around recording medium 70 and shelf 618, support recording medium 70 on shelf 618, and inhibit access to recording medium 70.